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There were about 20 guests, all Germans with the exception of Henry Tasca and myself. I had no opportunity to converse with Mr. Kissinger, because immediately after dinner von Brentano took me off and we talked for a couple of hours about various political matters; but we found time to crack a few jokes and to drench ourselves with some excellent beer.

Friday, January 23, 1959

Fred Luchsinger of the Neue Zuercher Zeitung came to lunch with me. I told him I dined with von Brentano last night, and he expressed the same good opinion of him that I entertain - intelligent, completely loyal to the Chancellor, sensible, courageous and honorable. He lacks the political flair necessary for outstanding success in parliamentary life, but in spite of his critics seems to both of us a good Foreign Minister.

Fred thinks the present cry to be flexible for the sake of flexibility may betray us all. He does not think it wise to depart from previous policies unless some substantial gain would thereby accrue to the Free World. That the Soviets would make concessions to our advantage appears to him entirely unlikely. Moreover, they are not disturbed over their present position in regard to the satellite countries and, in his estimation, have no reason to fear successful revolts. Under such circumstances, he thinks they will give away

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nothing at a bargaining table. However, the Western powers should be ready to meet them in conferences and to discuss, interminably if necessary, any topics they may develop, and attempt to show the falsity of Soviet accusations against the West.

I talked on similar lines with Bill Tyler this afternoon. We are still without any word as to any new Departmental thinking about Germany except that the working groups will soon start functioning in Washington. Meanwhile, some studies are being prepared in the German Foreign Office.

Mr. Siegfried Goetz, a member of the National Advisory Council on Rural Civil Defense, who lives in Frederick County, Maryland, came to see me. He is making a study of bomb shelters in Germany and says they are further advanced here in such construction than we are at home.

John Bross came up from Frankfurt and is spending the night at our house. We went together to a stag dinner given by Seymour Bolten for Henry Kissinger. Henry was born in Germany and lived here for his first twelve years. He speaks the language fluently. I had a long private talk with him after dinner. He feels if we depart from our firm attitude toward the Berlin problem our prestige will be hopelessly shattered everywhere in the world. He is pessimistic over the practicability, in the event of a war, of our being able to

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"pulverize" Russia. He thinks the casualties on both sides would be horrible, and the Soviets, by making the first attack, would have a considerable advantage over us. It was a gloomy conversation.

Saturday, January 24, 1954

At the office.

Dr. Nahum Goldman, President of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, came to see me this morning. Born in Germany, now for a long time an American citizen, he has been ~~active~~ active in securing indemnities in connection with Jews liquidated by the Hitler regime. He said, under the Chancellor's propulsion, the Parliament had appropriated, and would continue to appropriate, far larger sums for this purpose than any the Jews ever anticipated or even hoped for. The total amount to be paid by 1964 will be about four billion dollars. Against a pre-war population of about 600,000 Jews in Germany, there now remain in the Federal Republic only 30,000 and approximately 1500 in the East Zone.

Yesterday was a spring-like day, and this morning commenced in the same fashion, with intermittent rainy spells.

John Bross told me this morning he expected to go home in June and take a long rest at his farm in New Hampshire before deciding

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